

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

I. Status of the Claims.

Claims 14-23, 25-27, 29-31, and 33-49 remain pending in this Application. Claims 1-13, 24, 28, and 32 have been cancelled. Claims 14, 20, 22, and 25-27 are currently amended herein.

Claims 29-31 and 33-49 have been designated as allowable subject matter.

II. Remarks Regarding Claims 14-19, Which Stand Objected To As Depending Upon a Rejected Base Claim

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 14-19 as depending upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that the subject claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. *See Office Action*, at 7.

Applicants have amended claim 14 to rewrite it in independent form. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 14-19 are allowable over the art of record, and respectfully request the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance therefor.

III. Remarks Regarding Claims 20, 22-23, and 25-27, Which Stand Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,241,019 to Davidson et al.

Claims 20, 22-23, and 25-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,241,019 to Davidson et al (hereinafter, "*Davidson*"). However, Applicants have amended claims 20, 22, and 25-27 herein such that they now depend from amended claim 14, which, as described above in Part II, the Examiner previously designated as allowable if amended to be rewritten in independent form, which amendment has been made herein. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 20, 22-23, and 25-27 are allowable over the art of record, and respectfully request the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance therefor.

IV. Remarks Regarding Claim 21, Which Stands Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over *Davidson* in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,754,598 to Holloway, Jr..

Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as obvious over *Davidson* in view of U.S. Pat. No. 3,754,598 to Holloway, Jr. However, Applicants have amended claim 21 herein such it now depends from amended claim 20, which in turn depends from amended claim 14. As

described above in Part II, the Examiner previously designated amended claim 14 as allowable if amended to be rewritten in independent form, which amendment has been made herein. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 21 is allowable over the art of record, and respectfully request the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance therefor.

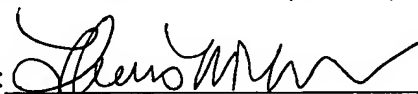
SUMMARY

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections as discussed herein. Applicants further submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicit timely notice of the same. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone, facsimile, or electronic mail.

Applicants believe that there are no additional fees due in association with this filing of this Response. However, should the Commissioner deem that any fees are due, Applicants respectfully request that the Commissioner accept this as a Petition Therefor, and direct that any additional fees be charged to Baker Botts L.L.P.'s Deposit Account No. 02-0383, Order Number 063718.0167.

Respectfully submitted,

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